

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
NEW DIRECTIONS TASK FORCE (NDTF)  
SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING ALLIANCE (ALLIANCE)**

**BUSINESS PLAN**

*(Adopted by NDTF on October 21, 2003)*

**Background**

The County of Los Angeles Special Needs Housing Alliance (Alliance) was created by the New Directions Task Force (NDTF) on June 10, 2001. The purpose of the Alliance is to provide an on-going forum for County departments, service providers, housing agencies, developers, and other stakeholders to coordinate resources and implement projects that continue addressing the unique housing and service needs of specific special needs populations in the County. Additionally, the Alliance will provide opportunities to develop and implement collaborative legislative and funding recommendations for increasing the availability of geographically dispersed, service-enriched housing in partnership with community-based organizations and non-profit entities.

For the purposes of this document, the term "County Departments" or "Departments," except where otherwise noted, includes: the Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the Departments of Community and Senior Services, Children and Family Services, Health Services, Mental Health, Probation and Public Social Services.

In the context of the Alliance, special needs populations are defined as: individuals with mental health issues; victims of domestic violence; persons living with HIV/AIDS; youth emancipating or emancipated from the dependency and delinquency systems; teen mothers, the frail elderly; and the developmentally disabled.

**Alliance Work Plan and Accomplishments**

The Alliance adopted a Work Plan consisting of a series of specific work products (see attached *Special Needs Housing Alliance Work Plan (revised: September 25, 2002)*). Accomplishments to date include:

- Completed report entitled, *Housing, Supportive Services and Funding Available for Special Needs Populations in Los Angeles County*. (Work Plan items: I and II)
- Developed and implemented Funding and Legislative Protocols for sharing information regarding funding, project, procurement and legislative information and activities across Alliance departments. (Work Plan item: III)
- Developed a Collaborative Agreement and Business Plan. (Work Plan item: IV-A)
- Included LAHSA and Shelter Partnership, Inc., in all aspects of Alliance planning to date.
- Secured support staff and technical assistance. On behalf of the Alliance, Shelter Partnership, Inc. sought and received a two-year \$170,000 (\$85,000 per year) grant from the

Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), which will enable Shelter Partnership Inc. to serve as support staff and provide technical assistance to the Alliance in pursuit of its mission.

### **Business Plan Goals**

This Business Plan builds on the aforementioned accomplishments, addresses outstanding Work Plan issues, and serves as a vehicle to transition the Alliance into an operational phase. This transition includes a series of organizational refinements for facilitating collaboration among County departments.

The ultimate goal of this business plan is to create a strong, integrated Countywide housing program that coordinates the capital, service and operational resources required to produce additional service enriched special needs housing on a project basis. Specifically, the Alliance will serve as a focal point for facilitating the development of projects responding to the service and housing needs of special needs populations.

Goals:

1. Execute a collaborative agreement between County departments to identify roles, responsibilities, and commitment of resources (December 2003).
2. Assess funding opportunities (May 2004).
3. Build on current efforts for continued coordination of special development opportunities (May 2004).
4. Develop and implement a two-year strategic plan for increasing the availability of special needs housing (March 2005).

### **Business Plan Outcomes**

1. County departments and community partners have access to information about funding opportunities and funding availability.
2. Additional special needs housing units are produced.
3. All special needs housing funds are expended.

### **Business Plan Strategies**

Strategy 1: Enhancing communication and outreach.

- A. Train Alliance department staff in the use of the Funding and Legislative Protocols: To ensure the effectiveness of the Protocol system and to maximize staff knowledge of special needs housing, Shelter Partnership Inc., will provide on-going training to department staff regarding the purpose and use of the Funding and Legislative Protocols.
- B. Enhancing communication with existing coalitions: (e.g., SCANPH, Housing Roundtable for Transitioning Youth): County departments will disseminate information and communicate, to the greatest extent possible, Alliance project, funding, and legislative activities to existing coalitions.
- C. Expanding partnerships with key stakeholders: It is contemplated that the City of Los Angeles will be partnered into Alliance activities. Additionally, efforts will be made to identify and engage key community stakeholders in Alliance activities on a project-by-project basis, or as deemed desirable by Alliance departments (Work Plan Item: IV-B).

Strategy 2: Coordinating County Departments.

- A. Execute a Collaborative Agreement among Alliance Departments: The Alliance will execute a Collaborative Agreement confirming departmental staff commitments and defining roles and responsibilities. The Alliance will meet as required to establish policy, oversee work, and facilitate projects as outlined in this business plan. The Alliance will continue to report to the NDTF.
- B. Organizational Refinements: Departments will assure representation on the Alliance by management staff who have access to decision makers, within the department, with the ability to commit available financial and staffing resources to implement policy decisions and projects. A representative from the Chief Administrative Office will chair the Alliance during its transition to an operational phase, to help assure: a coordinated effort establishing departmental representation on the Alliance is achieved; interdepartmental Design Teams (Work Groups described below) are convened; and coordination of available resources are facilitated. Once these organizational refinements have been completed any department may, at the pleasure of the Alliance, serve as Chair.
- C. County departments will be assigned the lead role on a project-specific basis, depending on the nature of the special needs population being served.
- D. Design Teams (Work Groups) for each special needs population: Work Groups will be established for various special needs populations or as project opportunities arise. Under the oversight of management from the "client" department (except LAHSA and

LACOE, as applicable), and with the assistance of Shelter Partnership, Inc., project-directed Work Groups will be able to access and coordinate the necessary interdepartmental capital, operational and service resources required to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Work Groups will be comprised of project managers from each department (except LAHSA and LACOE, as applicable) and will meet as often as required to implement the identified projects, and ensure the development and delivery of appropriate housing and services.

- E. Open planning and funding processes: Representatives will ensure that their department's budget planning and funding allocation processes promote access to, and coordination of, existing special needs housing related resources by the Alliance or any of its departments. The Alliance will monitor budget, spend-down processes and progress of projects (e.g., timely contracting with project operators, start of project operations, timely flow of funds to projects, etc.).
- F. Funds supporting Alliance activities: Shelter Partnership, Inc. will use its CSH grant funds to support the coordination of Alliance activities and address identified technical assistance needs that are consistent with the goals of the grant.
- G. Funding One-Stop: The Alliance will meet, as required, to identify, review and recommend departmental funding for proposed special needs housing projects; including funding for the capital, operating and support service aspects of each project.

### Strategy 3: Developing Resources.

- A. Maintenance of departmental inventory of resources and unmet need for special needs housing: As part of the *Housing, Supportive Services and Funding Available for Special Needs Housing in Los Angeles County* report, an inventory of existing housing programs and funding sources for each Alliance department was completed. A system for updating and maintaining this inventory will be facilitated by Shelter Partnership, Inc.
- B. Pursuit of external funding sources: Project Work Groups will identify public and private funding sources that can be effectively leveraged using County resources to enhance service enriched special needs housing.
- C. Develop a mechanism for capturing unmet needs related to Special Needs Housing; and facilitate the performance of a gap analysis based on data obtained.

Strategy 4: Creating project partnerships among County departments, community organizations, and public/private funders.

- A. Identify partnership models: The Alliance will identify model partnerships that have successfully produced special needs housing and effectively brought departments together to support such projects, e.g., Penny Lane's Columbus Transitional Housing project.
- B. Identify potential community partners and funders: The Alliance will maintain an on-going inventory of potential community partners (e.g., housing developers, support service providers, advocates, clients, etc.) and funders (e.g., foundations and corporations) specifically interested in special needs populations). Efforts to include said partners in Alliance activities will be made on a project specific basis, or as deemed desirable by the Alliance.

Strategy 5: Developing and implementing a two-year strategic plan for increasing the availability of special needs housing in the County. The plan will:

- A. Build on current short-term and long-term priority needs, as identified by agencies and existing collaborations, and develop long-term strategies for addressing them.
- B. Build on existing processes for evaluating outcomes.
- C. Ascertain geographic (e.g., Service Planning Area) special needs housing gaps.
- D. Develop strategies for maximizing special needs housing resource allocations.
- E. Identify priorities for pursuing special needs housing.
- F. Identify legislative/policy recommendations for enhancing service enriched special needs housing.